### **Conversation Contents**

My Turn: Why it's in our best interest to keep migrants alive

# "Humphrey, Jeff" <

To: Seth Ullenberg < Sid Slone < Sid Slone

CC: Chris Tincher <

Subject: My Turn: Why it's in our best interest to keep migrants alive

Just FYI.

This OpEd ran in the Arizona Republic on Friday.

http://www.azcentral.com/story/opinion/op-ed/2016/05/19/border-crossing-deaths-water-tanks/82898500/

# My Turn: Why it's in our best interest to keep migrants alive

Robin Hoover, AZ I See It 4:20 p.m. MST May 19, 2016

My Turn: Leaving water in the desert saves lives, money and the environment. But we need the federal government's help.

Robin Hoover May 23 is the anniversary of the deaths of 14

migrants in the far west desert along the west side of the Granite Mountains. The story is memorialized in Luis Alberto Urrea's award-winning book "The Devil's Highway," and it was recently recognized by the *Arizona Daily Star* as one of the top stories originating from southern Arizona.

(Photo: By Linda Valdez, Arizona

Republic)

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The chief ranger at Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument and others were already advertising the water and the distinctive blue flags in Sonoyta, Sonora, Mexico. Upon retirement, a high-ranking official of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service said, "That wasn't our best day."

The story went international. Five film crews from five countries interviewed me at the same location in the western desert on the same day. A wrongful-death administrative complaint was filed one year later, and a \$43 million lawsuit was filed a year after that. Both events went national and international again.

VALDEZ: Why are the feds letting immigrants die?

Attorneys representing families of 12 of the deceased migrants filed the claim and the suit. The suit did not prevail because the U.S. District Court ruled that the manager of the Cabeza Prieta refuge rightfully used his discretion to deny the permit based on incompatibility.

The problem was, no compatibility study was ever conducted. It was agreed that Humane Borders would place blue flags over existing wildlife watering holes and a few above-ground tanks to help reduce migrant deaths.

#### 15 years later, it's a best practice

The water tanks have been maintained now for 15 years without incident and no reported deleterious effects on wildlife.

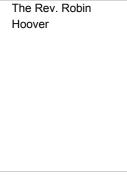
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SERIES: 'People are dying ... and we can't stand by'

Water stations have proven to be statistically significant in reducing migrant deaths. The stations reduce county costs for health care and for medical-examiner services. They also reduce search-and-rescue operations and the destruction of natural resources.

In 2010, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service did conduct a compatibility study at the Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge, which affirmed putting above-ground water tanks marked with blue flags as a best practice. The Fish and Wildlife Service also operates the Cabeza Prieta refuge.

#### New challenge: Water in remote areas



The Rev. Robin Hoover (Photo: Courtesy of Robin Hoover)

This practice has been endorsed by the Department of the Interior. All southern Arizona land managers need to seriously consider deploying even more water as the rate of migrant deaths continues to increase.

Humane Borders' tanks are located in areas that can be serviced by vehicles. Other humanitarian groups place caches of 1-gallon jugs of water in remote locations. They are not marked with flags.

#### **RELATED:** Border water tanks vandalized

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It's time for the federal land managers to deploy large-scale above-ground water stations, serviced by their own water trucks and clearly marked so that anyone in the desert will have access to potable water. Such efforts would reduce deaths, costs and destruction of resources.

Migrant Status Inc. is willing to meet with all federal entities that are involved: managers, law enforcement, resource specialists and others to help place water in the desert.

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Jeff Humphrey Public Affairs Specialist Fish and Wildlife Service 2321 West Royal Palm Road, Suite 103 Phoenix Arizona 85021

http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/arizona/

"Slone,	Sid"	<	
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From: "Slone, Sid" <

Tue May 24 2016 16:50:17 GMT-0600 (MDT) Sent: "Humphrey, Jeff" <j To:

CC: Beth Ullenberg < >, Chris Tincher <</p>

Re: My Turn: Why it's in our best interest to keep migrants alive Subject:

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Sid Slone Manager

Cabeza Prieta NWR 1611 N. 2nd Ave. Ajo, AZ 85321



From: "Slone, Sid" <:

Sent: Tue May 24 2016 16:53:21 GMT-0600 (MDT)

Brian Krukoski < //>
/>, Donald Ebann <c

>, Jose Valenzuela < >. Kenneth Carver Margot Bissell , Kim Veverka <</p> To: Mary Kralovec <</li> >, Mike West Scott Crozier Patricia Compton <</li> >, Shawn MacGill < >. Sid Slone

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